

Where To Get Help

Sometimes it's hard to ask for help, but you don't need to struggle alone. When you're depressed, others are affected, at home and even at work. So taking care of yourself is good for everyone, you and the people you interact with.

Myths About Getting Help

It's common for Service Members to worry that seeking the mental health help they need will hurt their careers: that asking for help means they're seen as weak or unable to perform their duties. **NOT TRUE.**

Consider these **FACTS**:

- *Top U.S. Military Commanders have stated publicly that they encourage all military personnel to get whatever mental health support they need.*
 - Your career is far more likely to suffer if you don't seek help than if you do, because not getting the help you need (and deserve) only makes things worse. When you don't get help for depression you risk performing poorly on the job, getting in trouble with your co-workers, and getting in trouble with your leadership.
- *"My leaders will have access to my mental health records."*
 - True. Information between a doctor and a Service Member becomes part of the Service Member's medical record and is available to commanding officers upon request. But in most cases, confidentiality is maintained between a chaplain or providers at a Military Treatment Facility and the person seeking help. Chaplains and other service providers should explain the limits of confidentiality or privacy to a Service Member. If they don't, just ask.
- *"My service records will show my mental health information."*
 - Military service records don't contain mental health information unless the Service Member was found unfit or unsuitable for military duty.
- *"My command discourages me from getting help."*
 - If you're not comfortable seeking mental health support through the military, please get the help you need via other resources (including those described below). Remember that you're doing the right thing: without help, your problems can worsen and endanger not just you, but the lives of everyone around you.





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Where You Can Get Help:

- **Your installation's support services can give you information and support.** Support services include your chaplain, a Military Treatment Facility, and family advocacy programs and family centers. Phone numbers can be found in your installation's military directory.
- **Talk to command.** Check in with a leader about how to handle a stressful situation before the situation gets out of control. Keeping leadership informed is good practice.
- **Make an appointment with a primary care provider (PCP).** Ask the PCP about available treatment options. Request a referral to a mental health practitioner if that's indicated.
- **MilitaryOneSource.** MilitaryOneSource provides brief counseling to active duty military personnel and their families, including Reservists and the National Guard. (1-800-342-9647; www.militaryonesource.com)
- **T*A*P*S** (The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors) is a nonprofit Veterans Service Organization that has a wide range of free services to all those affected by the death of a loved one in the armed forces. 1-800-959-TAPS (1-800-959-8277) or www.TAPS.org
- **Vet Centers** offer readjustment counseling for veterans and their families. Vet Center staff is available toll free at 1-800-905-4675 (Eastern) and 1-866-496-8838 (Pacific) or www.vetcenter.va.gov
- **Veteran Affairs Resources.** VA medical centers and Vet Centers provide veterans with affordable mental health services. Health insurance companies cover costs, or services cost little or nothing, depending on a veteran's ability to pay. The VA Medical Center system's specialized PTSD clinics and programs can provide educational information and diagnostic evaluations concerning PTSD to eligible veterans. Following discharge after deployment to a combat zone, veterans who have enrolled for VA services are qualified for two years of care for conditions potentially related to their service. www.va.gov
- **Local community services** can include crisis centers, mental health centers, or suicide prevention centers.
- **Suicide Hotlines:** The national suicide prevention lifeline is available 24-hours. **1-800-273-TALK** (1-800-273-8255) or **1-800-SUICIDE** (1-800-784-2433). Both suicide hotlines will connect the caller to a certified crisis center nearby. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- **Find mental health providers locally.** Check out: http://therapists.psychologytoday.com/ppc/prof_search.php



Remember: When in doubt or when your symptoms are ongoing and serious, seek in-person professional consultation with a primary care physician or mental health professional.